

THE CAPTAIN OF OUR SALVATION NO. 2619

**A SERMON
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DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON
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*"For it became him,
for whom are all things, and by whom are all things,
in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."*
Hebrews 2:10

OBSERVE, dear friends, how glorious God is. The description given here by the apostle contains but few words, and those nearly all little ones, but how full of meaning they are. "Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things." Here you have God set forth as being both the beginning and the end of everything. All things are for Him—to do His bidding, to accomplish His purpose, to set forth His glory, and this because all things are by Him—in their first creation, in their subsequent preservation, and in all that is yet to come of them.

Of whom speaks the apostle this but of the Triune God, to whom be glory forever and ever? Of whom speaks He this—if we would be still more exact—but of the Father who has made His Son perfect in bringing many sons unto glory? It is the Father "for whom are all things, and by whom are all things."

And my dear brethren, the apostle was wisely guided by the Holy Spirit to give this title to the Father in this particular place. Sometimes, in prayer, men call God by one or another of His names and each name may be correct, yet it may not be well chosen for that special occasion. But you will notice that if the Holy Spirit describes either God the Father or the Lord Jesus by any term other than His usual name, the title is always very wisely chosen and is most appropriate in that place.

Now, in the matter of our salvation, we need One, "by whom are all things," for none but the Creator can create us anew in Christ Jesus. No one who has less power than the Divine Preserver of men can keep us from falling. And none but the Divine Being who encompasses all things within the range of His infinite mind, can guard us against the many terrible perils on the way to heaven.

If ever we are to be brought to glory, it must be by the God "by whom are all things." And certainly, if we are brought there, as I pray that we all may be—it will be by Him "for whom are all things"—and we shall forever adore the mystery of His grace which landed us safely on the heavenly shore.

Every part of the great plan of salvation sets forth the splendor of the grace of the Most High God. What do we see in our election but His grace? What do we see in our redemption but His grace? What do we see in our conversion but His grace? What do we see in our justification, sanctification, adoption, and final preservation but His grace?

By Him, in grace as well as in nature, are all things—and for Him, in grace as well as in nature, are all things. Unto Him belong both the power and the glory, the two must ever go together. He works all our works in us and unto Him be all the praise, world without end!

We start, then, with this as a sort of keynote—that the great Father, who has purposed our salvation, is able to fully carry out what He has planned, for by Him are all things. And He also has an admirable reason for accomplishing it, because it will bring Him glory, and for Him are all things. If our salvation would degrade His name in any sense or respect, if the salvation of sinners would even obscure the severity of His justice, it might be a question as to whether it would ever be accomplished.

But since there is nothing about this work but what will bring Him honor and glory, we rest assured that, having put His hand to it, He will not withdraw His arm until He has fully accomplished His eternal purpose to the praise of the glory of His grace.

Our text sets before us some most precious truth concerning our Lord Jesus Christ and His people. First, here is *a high enterprise*—the bringing of many sons unto glory. In the second place, this enterprise is being carried out by *an ordained Captain*—there is a Captain of our salvation, through whom the many sons are to be brought unto glory. And thirdly, we are to notice *the becoming work of the Father upon Him who is Captain*. “For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.”

I. First, then, here IS A HIGH ENTERPRISE—the bringing of many sons unto glory.

I think that you will find the historical parallel of this enterprise in the Lord’s great work of bringing the tribes of Israel out of Egypt, through the Red Sea, through the wilderness, and into Canaan. The Lord, in His deliverance of His ancient people, gives us a type of what He is doing and will do for all His chosen.

The exodus was not merely the bringing of the people out of Egypt into the wilderness, for then they might truly have said to Moses, “Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness?” But the whole transaction was not completed, the enterprise was not finished, until all those whom the Lord intended to bless had actually crossed the Jordan and had taken possession of the promised land. He led not the children of Israel merely out of Egypt, but He led them into Canaan—and His leadership of them through the desert is a picture and emblem of Christ’s leadership of the many sons whom He is bringing unto glory. I want you to think of the salvation of the redeemed in that light.

To begin at the end, *the Lord Jesus is bringing many sons unto glory*, just as God brought His ancient people into Canaan. The ultimate destination of every believer is eternal glory. There is not one of us who will be perfect and complete until we stand at the right hand of God, even the Father. There is no secondary position where some of the redeemed may be satisfied to remain, but the many sons are all to be brought unto “glory.”

That is the word—one of the biggest words that can be spoken by any mortal mouth. Do you know all its meaning? No, my brethren, that you do not, and there is another word that comes before it—“The LORD will give *grace* and *glory*.” Do you know all the meaning even of “*grace*”? No, you do not—yet you have tasted of God’s grace, and if you know not all the meaning of that of which you daily partake, I am sure you do not know the meaning of that “*glory*” which you have not yet obtained.

Heaven is rightly called “*glory*.” I do not doubt that it is a very glorious place. People have written books in which they have sought to give us some idea of heaven as perfecting all the joys of our earthly domestic life, and artists have tried to depict the plains of heaven. But the books and the works of art are equally worthy to be burnt, for they fall so infinitely short of what the reality must be that they are only a caricature and a mockery of what “*glory*” must really be.

No, beloved, no tongue can tell what it is, and no pencil can depict the glory of the place itself, the Father’s house, where the many mansions be.

*“Eye hath not seen it, my gentle boy;
Ear hath not heard its sweet songs of joy;”*

nor shall your imagination be able to bring these things down to you, for there is a spiritual glory which must far exceed all the glories of which you know anything on earth.

I think, also, that heaven is called “*glory*” because its inhabitants follow glorious pursuits. What they are doing there all day long, I shall not attempt to guess, but we are told that “the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him. They shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.”

They will have enough to do to cast their crowns at His dear feet who gave them all the joy they have—and to make known to principalities and powers in heavenly places the manifold wisdom of God. Of this we are quite sure—all their pursuits will be glorious, there will be nothing low, nothing groveling, nothing selfish, done in heaven. Certainly, nothing wearisome, nothing laborious, that can bring again to the brow the sweat that comes here because of the curse. No, it is a glorious place where the happy dwellers are engaged in glorious pursuits.

And they also have glorious pleasures. They realize to the full what David said, “In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.” Did you ever think—have you the power to conceive—what the pleasures of God must be? What is the joy of the Lord—the infinite satisfaction of the Eternal—the profound bliss of Him who is most blessed forever?

It is that joy, that bliss, that peace, of which they shall have a share as the Master says to each one of them, “Enter thou into the joy of thy LORD.” As high as the heavens are above the earth, so high is God’s joy above our joy. Therefore we cannot attempt to describe it, but we can only say of it that the joy of heaven is glory, the bliss of heaven is “from glory unto glory” forever and ever.

And as heaven is a glorious place for glorious pursuits and glorious pleasures, so all there will be glorious persons. There is not one low or mean inhabitant of heaven. There are many there who were despised on earth—the lowly and the suffering and the persecuted—but they are no longer despised. God has put eternal honor upon them.

They are all priests and kings unto God. The priestly garments they wear are more grand than Aaron’s raiment of glory and beauty, and in their royal robes they keep high holiday, where the sun goes no more down, and the days of their mourning are forever ended. It is all glorious and I do not wonder that heaven is called “glory,” and that we have so little said about it. There is just this great word—“glory”—which by itself says more than I would be able to say if I kept you here till the clock tolled out the midnight hour.

This is the high enterprise of God, to bring His many sons to glory. I call it a high enterprise, and so it is, for *He will bring them unto glory despite all difficulties*. Where do the redeemed begin their march? Down there, at the iron furnace, where they have lien among the pots, and where their slavery has been hard and cruel. Their march begins with Pharaoh to oppose them, but with a high hand and an outstretched arm, does God brings them up out of the bondage of nature, and out of the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

How gloriously does He lead them through the Red Sea and destroy their adversaries with the precious blood of Jesus, till the depths have covered them, and there is not one of them left! And the rest of the passage of His people, from that high day at the Red Sea onward till they reach glory—what is it but a march of miracles, an ever-moving panorama of wonders? I do but speak of the experience of the true Christian when I say that he is opposed from within and from without, and that he is his own greatest enemy—and that is not saying a small thing when I remind you that the world, the flesh, and the devil are all leagued against him.

It is with push of pike that I make my way to heaven, disputing with my fierce foe every inch of the road. Yet shall I win the day, for He, “by whom are all things,” has undertaken to lead His sons to glory and He will lead them there. If they had to cut their way through a whole legion of devils, as when men reap their road through a thick cornfield, yet should they every one of them pass through unharmed.

If there were seven thousand hells between them and heaven, yet should they reach it in safety because He, “for whom are all things, and by whom are all things,” has determined to bring them there. Yet it is no easy march, and it will be no little glory that shall redound to Him, who will lead us all through the wilderness and bring us to the Canaan which is above, that is, to “glory.”

I want you to notice next that this high enterprise on God’s part is concerning *the bringing of “many sons unto glory.”* In the second part of *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, we read about Mr. Great-heart, who had a tough task to lead those women and children all the way to the Celestial City. They caused him a deal of trouble and he is a picture of many a Christian minister.

Some of us have not to go before a few faint-hearted pilgrims, but we have to lead hundreds or even thousands. Every morning before breakfast, I have to kill a giant for somebody or other, and hard fighting it is. And as soon as ever I have killed him, I hear some one of the dear children crying out that he is going to be eaten up alive by another, so that I have to keep my sword always drawn. It is no easy task to be, under Christ, helping to bring some of these sons unto glory.

But think of the work that God has undertaken—to bring many sons unto glory—untold millions of them. I shall not attempt to use figures to represent the numbers of the saved, for I believe my Master's redeemed ones will be as the dew of the morning, as the drops of the spray, as the sands on the seashore, and far excelling the starry hosts marshaled on the midnight plains. Many sons will be brought unto glory by the great Father.

Sometimes, in the old days of war, there used to be a number of little ships wanting to cross the sea, but the privateers were on the watch, so the seamen were afraid to hoist the sail and get away from the shelter of the shore, for they would soon be caught by their enemies, like doves by the hawk. Well, what was done?

There they lay, in port, until His Majesty sent down a man-of-war, perhaps two or three, to be a convoy. Then the little ships would all be safe—their crews need not any longer be afraid of the Frenchmen or the Spaniards. So is it with those who are under the protection of God. We, weak little vessels, could never by ourselves reach our desired haven, but lo! the Lord High Admiral of the seas and the great Emperor of the land has come forth in the majesty of His power to conduct us to glory.

And we shall get there safely, even though our enemies should be beyond all count. It was a grand thing when those convoys brought many little ships into harbor, but what a fleet the Lord will bring into the Fair Havens of eternal felicity!

We read that on one occasion, when the Lord Jesus was crossing the Sea of Galilee, “there were also with him other little ships.” And there are still with Him many other little ships, but He will bring them all safely into the harbor. Let the enemy attack them if he dares to do so, but their Protector will preserve them all, for it is His purpose to bring many sons unto glory.

I have not yet said all I want to say about this high enterprise, for perhaps the chief wonder of it all is that He, “for whom are all things, and by whom are all things,” *has resolved to bring unto glory many sons*. They shall all of them be His sons. Oh, what a marvel it is that they should be His sons! Who will have them for sons? I am sure that there is many a man who might be ashamed to take for sons those whom God takes—the most depraved, debased, and fallen—whom men have passed by, as those to whom they could not even speak.

The Lord, in infinite love, has taken them to be His children and He has said of them, “I will be a Father unto them, and they shall be My sons and daughters.” But oh, what a work is needed in order to turn these rebels into children! What a wonder of grace it is that they should first be regenerated and so get the nature of children. And then that they should be adopted and so have the status of children. And then that they should be sanctified, and so exhibit, from day to day, those qualities that must be found in the children of a holy God! To make them sons is indeed a wonderful work.

God did not do as much as that for the people in the wilderness. In that respect, the type broke down, for the Israelites would not be God’s sons. He acted as a father towards them, but they were rebels against Him, and therefore, the carcasses of that first generation fell in the wilderness. What a mercy it is that God does not now write the law on tables of stone, but on the fleshy tablets of our hearts.

And the law of God being written there, He gives us the grace to obey it, and especially, He gives us grace to believe in Jesus and to receive Him. John wrote, “As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.” And it is still true of all who receive Him and believe on His name.

Oh, what a mercy it is that guilty sinners may so receive the adoption of children! What a blessed thing it is that God will not only bring us unto glory, but that we shall be sons when He gets us there! He will bring us unto glory as sons—we shall be His sons while on the road and we shall be owned as His

sons in the presence of the entire universe in that day when the righteous shall “shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father,” for that is the glorious kingdom to which He is going to bring us.

Blessed be His name that ever He should make us sons and resolve to bring us to glory! Ah, well, He has set His heart upon doing it and He can do it—therefore let us again bless and praise His holy name!

II. Now I turn to my second point, which is concerning THE ORDAINED CAPTAIN.

God intends to bring “many sons unto glory,” but He means to do it by the hand of a chosen Captain, greater than Joshua, who will fight for His people and conduct them safely into the Canaan of “glory.”

The word here translated “captain” is, in another place, rendered “author,” and in yet another passage “prince.” In fact, it is twice translated “Prince.” But I feel perfectly satisfied to take the term as our Authorized Version gives it and to say that *the Lord our God leads His people unto glory by a Captain.*

He might have done it, if so it had pleased Him, by His own power and might, apart from a Mediator, but He has not done so. He has ordained everything by the hand of a Mediator and it is an essential part of His arrangement of the whole system of grace that the Father should work by the Son to bring the many sons to glory, that the Son should bring them there by being the Captain in their midst, representing Him amongst men, being clothed with His power, effecting His divine purpose for them.

God will bring no sons unto glory except through this Captain. None may ever hope to enter glory except by Christ Jesus. He Himself has said, “I am the way.” And He is the only way. Therefore, woe be to those who refuse to come to God by Him! God will bring all His sons unto glory, but it must be by the Captain whom He has ordained. Let us think for a little while what a captain is and what a captain has to do, for that will help us to understand the office and work of the Captain of our salvation.

First, then, the Lord Jesus Christ has come to conduct us unto glory by *making all arrangements for the march.* There is a great deal of responsibility connected with the leader of an army, not only in deciding as to where his troops shall encamp for the night, but where they shall march on the morrow, and in what direction they will be likely to be needed many days ahead.

The commissariat of an army requires great thoughtfulness and care on the part of the leader and our Captain, the Lord Jesus Christ, has made all needful arrangements for His people between here and heaven. I am quite sure that we shall never come to a halting place, between here and glory, of which we shall be able to say that no provision has been made for us there. *Providence*, or seeing beforehand, is always at work on behalf of the Lord’s people. God is always looking ahead and Christ makes every arrangement for the salvation of all His people, even down to the minutest details. He is a most blessed Captain.

A captain’s work, after he has arranged for the march, is, next, to *give the word of command.* “Go,” says he, or, “Stay.” “Do this,” or, “Be still.” The soldier’s one business is to obey his orders. He has not any right to choose what he will do. His marching orders are to be his law. Now, the Lord Jesus Christ will lead many sons to the glory of His Father by giving those gracious commands which always bring a blessing with them whenever they are obeyed.

Captains, however, do more than command, for if they are wise, they *lead the way.* I have heard that a Turkish officer says to his men, “Go along,” and stays behind and watches the soldiers. But when a British officer cries, “Come on!” and leads the way. That is what our Lord has done. In the sternest fight, He is always conspicuous, and there is no weary march that He bids us tramp in which He does not foot it at our side. You shall never climb so high that you will not find the footprint of the Crucified there, nor shall you be called to descend even into the depths of the sea but you shall find that He has been there too, for He leads us always as the Captain of our salvation.

It is a captain’s business, also, to *encourage his men.* How often the presence of a true leader has effected more for the army than all their own strength could do! When Basing could not be taken by the Parliamentary troops in Cromwell’s day, “Old Noll” went down and he took Basing, directly, as he did every other place that he determined to capture.

And infinitely more glorious is the Captain of our salvation, whose presence secures victory to the most discouraged band. If they do but see Him, and say, "It is He," the next word is, "Be not afraid," for where He comes, devils fly. The earth shakes at the presence of the Christ of God. It is the captain's business to encourage his men, and that our great Captain does continually.

Sometimes it is the captain's delight to *reward his followers*. A wise leader gives words of praise when they are deserved, and on special occasions, he distributes more substantial things. As for our blessed Lord, His gracious commendation, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant," would more than repay us for the toils of a lifetime—even if our lifetime were longer than Methuselah's. Let us, then, be faithful and true as we have such a Captain as our Lord Jesus Christ, who can do for us all that captains should do for their soldiers, and a great deal more.

Now, seeing that it is the will of the Lord to lead us unto glory by the Captain of our salvation, I want you to be worthy of your Leader. Do you not think that, sometimes, we act as if we had no Captain? We fancy that we have to fight our way to heaven by the might of our own right hand and by our own skill, but it is not so.

If you start before your Captain gives you the order to march, you will have to come back. And if you try to fight without your Captain, you will rue the day. "Oh!" says one, "but I have been thinking today what I shall do if so-and-so happens." My dear brother, it would be a great deal better for you to remember that "the Lord liveth," and to leave the thinking and arranging in His hands.

There are a great many *ifs* in the world that are like a swarm of wasps—if you let those *ifs* out, they will sting you from head to foot. But there is one glorious *if* that will kill them all. It is this—if the Lord Jesus Christ could fail—if He could desert us, then all would be lost. That kills all the other *ifs*, because it is an impossible *if*. He cannot fail us or leave us. He must live, He must conquer, and while that is the case, the other *ifs* do not mean anything to us.

Therefore, cast yourselves on your Captain's care. March onward though you cannot see your way. Fly at the enemy though they seem to outnumber you by ten to one, for greater is He that is for you than all that can be against you. Be not afraid of anything, for your Captain is equal to all emergencies.

When the Lord our God chose Him as our Leader and Commander, He laid help upon One that was mighty. He did not take some poor weak mortal to be the captain of such a company as we are. He did not even select an angel for this great task. He exalted One chosen out of the people who was most suitable for the position—and God's wisdom would be dishonored if Christ were found incapable of bringing the many sons unto glory.

But He is blessedly capable of all that is required of Him—and the ancient prophecies concerning Him shall be completely fulfilled. "He shall not fail nor be discouraged." "and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand."

III. Thus far, then, we have seen that the Great Father will bring His many sons to glory by a Captain, but the pith of the text lies in the part we have now to consider, and that is, THE BECOMING WORK OF THE FATHER UPON OUR CAPTAIN. "It became him, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."

God always acts becomingly and therefore, *it was right that Christ should suffer*. I have sometimes heard discussions as to whether the Lord might not have saved sinners without a Mediator, or if through a Mediator, whether we might not have been saved by some other method without the death of Christ. I do not think it is right for us to form any kind of judgment upon that matter, but to say, as our risen Lord said to His disciples, "It behoved Christ to suffer."

It was becoming that Christ should die. "It pleased the LORD to bruise him." It was a seemly and proper thing, in the sight of Him, "for whom are all things, and by whom are all things," that we should be saved by a Mediator, and that the chosen Mediator should not have us apart from His own terrible sufferings.

It was becoming that *our Captain should be made perfect, complete, fully equipped for saving us, by suffering*. The agony could not be left out. The cup must not pass from Him without His drinking its

awful contents. It was becoming that Christ should be poor—so He had not where to lay His head. It was becoming that He should be hungry—so He fasted for forty days. It was becoming that He should sweat great drops of blood.

It was a becoming thing in the sight of God that there should be suffering on the part of His chosen Captain. It was becoming that He should be spit upon—that He should be mocked—that He should be scourged—that He should be nailed to a tree—that He should be parched with fever and in awful depression of spirit, should cry, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” It was becoming that all this should happen and therefore it did happen. Let that be a sufficient answer to us whenever we are asked any questions about Christ’s suffering—it was becoming in God’s sight.

And let those who deny the atonement, and those precious critics who sneer at every hymn that tells of the agonies of Christ, understand that it was becoming that He should endure all this, and that we are not ashamed to sing of what God counts becoming. I, for one, mean still to sing,—

*“His dying crimson, like a robe,
Spreads o’er His body on the tree.”*

I mean still to sing,—

*“Well might the sun in darkness hide,
And shut his glories in,
When God, the mighty Maker, died
For man, the creature’s sin.”*

Even though it seems to some as if we knew Christ after the flesh, I would rather know Him so than not at all.

And some seem to wish not to know Him anyhow. They want especially to get rid of the blood—“the offense of the cross” has not yet ceased, it is still a cause of stumbling to a great many. But oh, I pray you who are offended at the cross, not to think that you will ever get to heaven, for God and you would not agree there, for He counts the cross becoming, and you count it foolishness—so there is a radical difference of opinion between you two, and one heaven would not hold you.

You must get agreed with God about that matter, or else, depend upon it, you will never enter the pearly gates. You must honor the Son even as you honor the Father, and honor the Son in His blood and wounds, and in all His agony and death, or else you shall not come where the Father takes pleasure in the Well-beloved.

Further, the text seems to say that *it was becoming that Christ should be made perfect through suffering*. There are many points in which Christ could not save us without suffering. He could not be a perfect Substitute unless He bore our sin and shame. He could not be a perfect Sympathizer unless He bore our suffering. This, perhaps, is the main point in which Christ is perfected.

He becomes capable of entering into all the griefs that disturb the many sons whom He is to lead unto glory. In our Elder brother, the heir of all things, there is an epitome of all the sorrows of all the rest of the family. In Christ there is every pang that rends the heart, every grief that forces tears from the eyes—except such griefs as are sinful and could not enter into His holy bosom—but everything that is inevitable to flesh and blood, to hearts that break, and spirits that are depressed, everything of that kind, Jesus knows.

I have been sometimes where none of you have ever been, but I have never been where I could not find Christ. And some of you, my dear brothers, have been in heartbreaking trouble that I never knew. But the Master has been there, if the Pastor has not, and if the dearest Christian friend has not—and so He has become perfect through suffering.

"I know their sorrows," He says, "I know their sorrows, not by having read or heard about them, but by having suffered them." Of all the bitter drugs in the great apothecary's store, Christ has had a draught. He knows all about them and this makes Him "perfect through sufferings."

Finally, it was becoming on the part of God, "for whom are all things, and by whom are all things," that He should perfect His Son as our Captain through sufferings. But the original Greek gives us a fuller meaning than this—that God should glorify His Son. It is becoming on God's part that He should give to Christ everything that can make Him glorious and honorable.

Seeing that He bowed His head to suffer and to die, it was meet that God should raise Him from the dead, that He should set Him at His own right hand, that He should crown Him with many crowns, that He should give Him to "have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth." It is becoming that Christ should have all honor and glory paid to Him, that men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father.

In prayer, when I want an argument that I know will prevail with God, I say to Him, "Father, glorify Your Son! You love Him, look at Him, is He not lovely in Your eyes, as the suffering, obedient Son of Your love? Do You not admire Him beyond all conception? Therefore, hear my supplication and grant my petition for His sake."

I like, sometimes, to leave off praying and singing, and to sit still, and just gaze upward till my inmost soul has seen my Lord. Then I say, "He is inexpressibly lovely. Yea, He is altogether lovely." If He is that to my poor eyes, which are so dull and dim that they cannot half discern His beauties, what must He be in the eyes of God?

In the eyes of God, He is so precious that, as my text says, "It became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things"—it was becoming even in Him, "in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings"—glorified beyond all imaginable glory and to have universal homage paid to Him throughout the universe forever and ever.

God sees it to be becoming and therefore we delight in it. Amen and amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON

HEBREWS 2:1-15

Verse 1. *Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.*

We have heard them. Do not let us forget them. Let them not be like the driftwood which goes floating down the stream. Let us make a desperate effort to retain them in our memories, and above all, to ponder them in our hearts.

2-3. *For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation;*

They could not trifle with the angels' message without receiving just punishment from God. Much less, then, can we trifle with Christ's Gospel. We have not an angelic savior, but God Himself, in the person of His Son, has deigned to be the Mediator of the new covenant. Therefore, let us see to it that we do not trifle with these things.

You see, dear friends, that we need not be great open sinners in order to perish—it is merely a matter of neglect. See how it is put here. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation?" You need not go to the trouble of despising it, or resisting it, or opposing it. You can be lost readily enough simply by neglecting it. In fact, the great mass of those who perish are those who neglect the great salvation,—

3. *Which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;*

The apostles and the other followers of our Lord constantly bore witness to His miracles and His resurrection.

4. God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

Those who doubt the truth of the Gospel, or who say they do, are often found believing historical statements that are not half as well proved. A man sits down and reads a book of the Gallic wars and he believes that Julius Caesar wrote it—yet there is not a half or a tenth as much evidence to prove that he did write it as there is to prove that our Lord Jesus lived, and died, and rose again from the dead.

The witness to the truth of these great matters of fact has been borne by God Himself with signs, and wonders, and miracles. Honest and true men, apostles and others, have witnessed them—and they have also been certified by Incarnate Deity, even by the Lord who deigns to speak to us by His Spirit. We cannot, therefore, trifle with this Gospel without incurring most serious guilt.

5. For to the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, of which we speak.

We are the preachers of it—not the angels. And the great Author and Finisher of our faith is the Man Christ Jesus—not an angel. We have not now the ministry of angels, but the ministry of men, by whom the Lord of the angels sends His messages to their fellows.

6-8. But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet.

This was the original status of man. God made him to be His vicegerent on earth and he would still hold that position were it not that, since he has rebelled against his own Sovereign, even the beasts of the field take liberty to be rebellious against him. Man is not now in his original estate and therefore he rules not now. And we see many men who are very far from being royal beings, for they are mean and groveling. Yet the glory of man is not all lost, as we shall see.

8-9. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus,

Here is the representative Man who is supreme over all. “We see Jesus,”

9. Who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

Oh, how glorious it is to realize our position in Christ and to see how He has lifted us up, not merely to the place from which the first Adam fell, but He has made us stand so securely there that we shall not again descend around the ruins of the Fall. Glory be to His holy name!

10-11. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,

The Christ and the Christian are one—the Man Christ Jesus, and the men whom He redeemed are one. He has so become partaker of our nature that now we are one family and He is not ashamed to call us brothers. Am I addressing any who are ashamed of Christ, or who are ashamed of God’s poor people, and who would not like to be known to be members of a poor church?

Ah! how you ought to be ashamed of yourselves for having any such pride in your hearts, for Christ is not ashamed to call His people brethren! Oh, what wondrous condescension! He has done this many times in the Psalms where He speaks of His brethren;

12. Saying, I will declare thy name to my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise to thee.

That is a quotation from the 22nd Psalm.

13. And again, I will put my trust in him.

Thus entering into the very faith of His people.

13-14. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood,

As you know to your cost, for perhaps you have aches and pains about you at this very moment. Verily, you are “partakers of flesh and blood.” Perhaps you are suffering from despondency and depression of spirit. If so, that reminds you that, however much you may, in spirit, sometimes soar to heaven, yet you are still “partakers of flesh and blood.”

14-15. *He also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*

He so took upon Him flesh and blood as to die in our nature, that thus He might slay death, and might set us free from all fear of death. Do you not see that, if the representative Man, Christ Jesus, died, He also rose again, and that so also will all who are in Him rise, too? If you are in Him, you shall rise again.

Therefore, fear not to lie down in your last sleep, for the trumpet shall awaken you and your bodies shall be molded afresh like unto His glorious body, and your soul and body together shall dwell in infinite bliss forever. “Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—289, 336, 294

Taken from The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit C. H. Spurgeon Collection. Only necessary changes have been made, such as correcting spelling errors, some punctuation usage, capitalization of deity pronouns, and minimal updating of a few archaic words. The content is unabridged. Additional Bible-based resources are available at www.spurgeongems.org.